

History of Alphistia: 1967-77



(Putnam St in Newport, Ky)

Introduction

I created Alphistia in December 1967. It had an "existence" on Putnam Street in Newport Kentucky until 1973, when it became virtual. By the time I was finishing my first year in college in 1977, Alphistia became what it has remained until today: an elaborate imagining of a geofictional country. This little booklet (and the webpage with the same text), is being published during the jubilee celebrations for Alphistia's fortieth anniversary.

A few terms such as "Klava" "lesenum" "Spor" etc might at first seem unfamiliar. But reading through the short entries that are listed alphabetically, each of these words are explained and will soon become familiar to the reader as intrinsic parts of Alphistia and its history.

Please enjoy this nostalgic journey down Alphistia's memory lane.

Anthony Skaggs

Early Alphistia A to Z

ABS - The Alphistian Broadcasting Service never had access to the airwaves. "Radio" programs were made on the cassette recorder we had and distributed to various people on Putnam St. Also, a sort of filmstrip was made for use on the little "sanovision" boxes that substituted as Alphistian television.

ADS - The Alphistian Department Store was the only retail outlet during the 1967-77 period in Alphistian history. Ordinarily, it sold snacks, soft-drinks, booklets, sanovision filmstrips, and sometimes household items such as soap, furnishings for rooms in Entiba made by Alphistian citizens, and toys. ADS had its own building in 1973 or 1974 in the most developed constructed town that was built at 924 Putnam St (Sakazhavesa). This was a real general store and accepted only perantes and pengos for purchases. There were some problems with price-gouging, since the Alphistian economy had many problems with supply and demand, and its citizens' knowledge of economics was minimal. Often ADS had nothing at all to sell, and Alphistians had stacks of perantes printed out on the mimeograph machine, but there was nothing to buy. Runaway inflation was the result.

alphabet - The Alphistian alphabet was invented in 1967, and inspired by a table of alphabets in the Golden Book Encyclopedia (see image). The alphabet had 22 letters, and several were original creations (the letters A,F,K,M,N,Ch,Sh. Each letter had its own Alphistian name, as follows:

aba, ba, da, ea, fa, ha, ia, ka, la, ma, na, oba, pa, ra, sa, ta, ua, va, za, cha, sha.

↓	aba	A	Ω	ma	M
β	ba	B	Φ	na	N
<	tse	C	Ο	oba	O
▷	da	D	Π	pa	P
←	ea	E	ρ	ra	R
*	fa	F	Z	sa	S
⊠	zhe	G/ZH	T	ta	T
Hk	ha	H	Λ	ua	U/v
I	ia	I	M	va	W/v
∪	ka	K	γ	ya	Y
∟	la	L	Z	za	Z

(a version of the alphabet in use around 1971)

In the first year of the Alphistian "language", English words were simply spelled out using Alphistian names for the letters. The inconsistencies of English spelling was a challenge though using this system. By 1969-1970, Alphistian words were being invented.

Around 1971, the Alphistian alphabet was replaced with the Latin alphabet. After that, Alphistian letters were only used decoratively.

ATS (Alphistian Telephone Service) - Alphistia did not have its own telephone system other than tin cans and string "phones" that sometimes were made, ATS though - the Alphistian Telephone Company was created in 1975, and soon a short telephone book for Entiba was written. It contained an alphabetical listed of the several hundred imaginary inhabitants of the capital, mostly with names that ended in "-sen", due to a growing Scandinavian influence. It didn't include the yellow pages, although this was planned. Sadly, the ATS phone book was discarded, probably at some point before 1980.

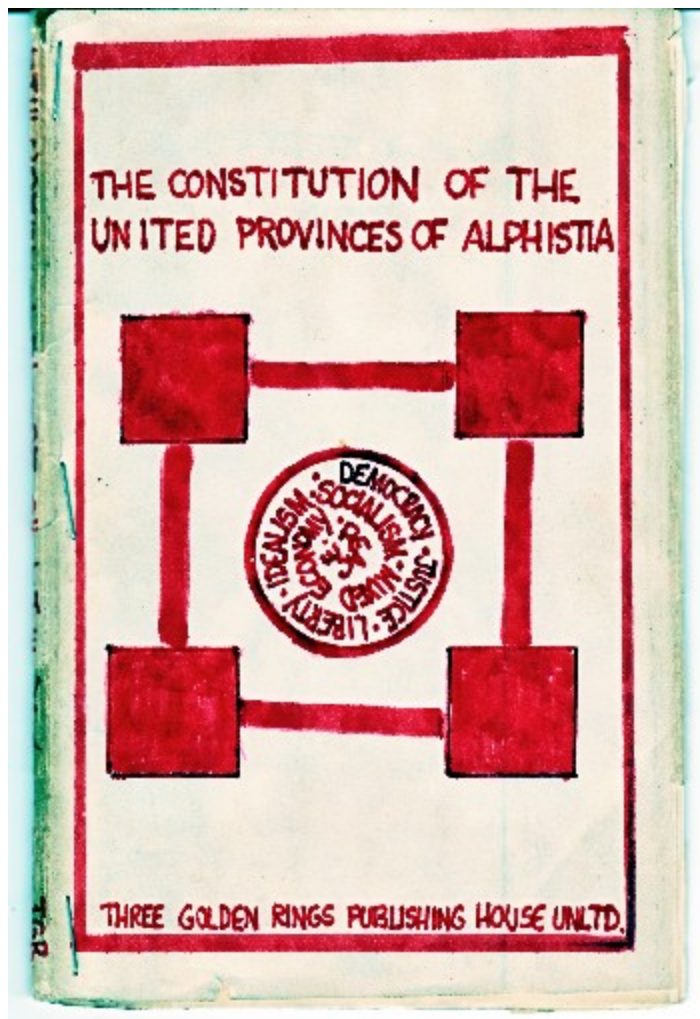
Bardanste - Bardanste was one of the original provinces of Alphistia and was located at 928 Putnam St. Its name comes from abbreviating the names of the three children living there: Barbara, Danny, and Steve. All three were very active from the late 1960s through the early 1970s. Barbara was named the “Sporess” and Danny actually won as “Spor” in an election that whose results were suppressed. There were frequent arguments with the Bardanste citizens with long periods of no contact. In 1974, when Alphistia became virtual, the rift was complete.

books – Between 1967 and 1976 I started far more booklets than I ever completed, and nearly all of them have disappeared, but from memory I can make a list (not in chronological order) of booklets that were completed. Here is what I remember: English-Alphistian dictionary, Alphistian language textbook, Constitution of Alphistia, Alphistian telephone book, a novella set in Alphistia, UPA '74, a personal diary written in Alphistian in 1973, The Alphistian System of Government, New World magazine (at least two issues).

calendar - Around 1969 and 1970, I devised a calendar made up of 12 months of 30 days each, with an additional holiday period of 5 days at the end of the year (6 in leap years). Each week consisted of 5 days, with one day per week for rest. I gave the months and days of the week unique Alphistian names, and then made up the calendar to hang in my room. Unfortunately none of the calendars survived (I made several and changed many of the names). I can't remember any of the names for months or the days now.

coins - Before 1970, Alphistia had its own coins. These were made from cracked clay pots, and the pieces were made into roughly round shapes. The denomination was written on one side and the Alphistian letter for “A” on the other. It was called the pengo, and was the only currency of the country until sometime after 1970, when the perante began to be printed by mimeograph. Although some of the pengo coins were buried in Sakazhavesa, it has not been possible to return for an archaeological dig. None of the unburied coins have survived.

Constitution of 1976 – In the summer before I started college, I spent some time writing Alphistia's first constitution. I had done some reading on the American constitution, and also the Stalin Constitution of the USSR from 1936 (which promised much but delivered very little). I modeled the Alphistian constitution much more on the US constitution as far as separation of powers, rights and freedoms of citizens, and local government. Still it was somewhat socialistic and quite admittedly liberal in the American sense of the word. I made a little booklet and wrote out the constitution by hand with a fountain pen. This booklet has survived.



Davidika und Moria – Across the street from our house, a pair of elderly sisters lived in a red brick house with a gorgeous tree in front. They were Hazel Davis and Lola Moore. They often sat in their front yard each evening reading and talking with neighbors, including me. They doted on my Alphistian projects and accepted many little newspapers and other documents I made about Alphistia. Because of their kindness, I included them as citizens of Alphistia and their house was a province, which I called Davidika und Morea.

dictionary – Sometime in 1973, I made a dictionary of Alphistian, based on an Esperanto dictionary I borrowed from the Cincinnati Public Library. It was more than 100 pages long and had about 2000 words in it, although there was a point where I gave up on word creation and arbitrarily invented hundreds of words out of thin air. It was a lot of work for a 15 year old, and took several months. I crafted a cover from red cardboard and taped that to the pages. It wasn't made to last and didn't, although the book itself survived about 10 years, when my mother accidentally disposed of it and many other countless Alphistian documents. I had told her "that

box” under her bed didn’t contain anything useful, and my mom promptly disposed of it. That was a real shame, because it was this young adult foolishness that rid me of most of Alphistia’s artifacts from those early years.

elections – Alphistia did not have many elections, and had even fewer when the only one I can remember did not have the outcome I wished for. In an election for Spor around 1971, there were two candidates: me and Danny from Bardanste, and I lost. I deliberately miscounted the votes in a moral lapse, and was caught. There was a rebellion by the voters (half a dozen other kids), and Danny did become Spor. He was not interested in the job for very long though, so Alphistia soon again was under “my control”. During most of its existence in its early years, it was assumed by me and the other kids involved that the Spor was more of a monarch than an elected leader.

Entiba - Entiba was named after Entebbe in Uganda, which I had read about in geography class in the fourth grade. That was in 1968 or 1969. The name stayed the same until the late 1980s, when it was Alphistianized into Enteve.

episcope - Probably in 1971 or 1972, I saw an advertisement in the weekly family newspaper “Grit” for a projector called the episcope. I convinced my mother to splurge on the device (it cost no more than 4 or 5 dollars), and 4-6 weeks later, the package arrived with a small bright orange-red device with the word “Episcopio” on its side. It was extremely easy to operate – simply place any drawing or photo of 3 by 5 inches under the machine and it would be projected onto a wall or screen. I set about making Alphistian newsreels immediately, recording soundtracks with the small cassette tape recorder we had (state-of-the-art for its time). The local kids were fascinated with my propaganda filmstrips and cartoons.



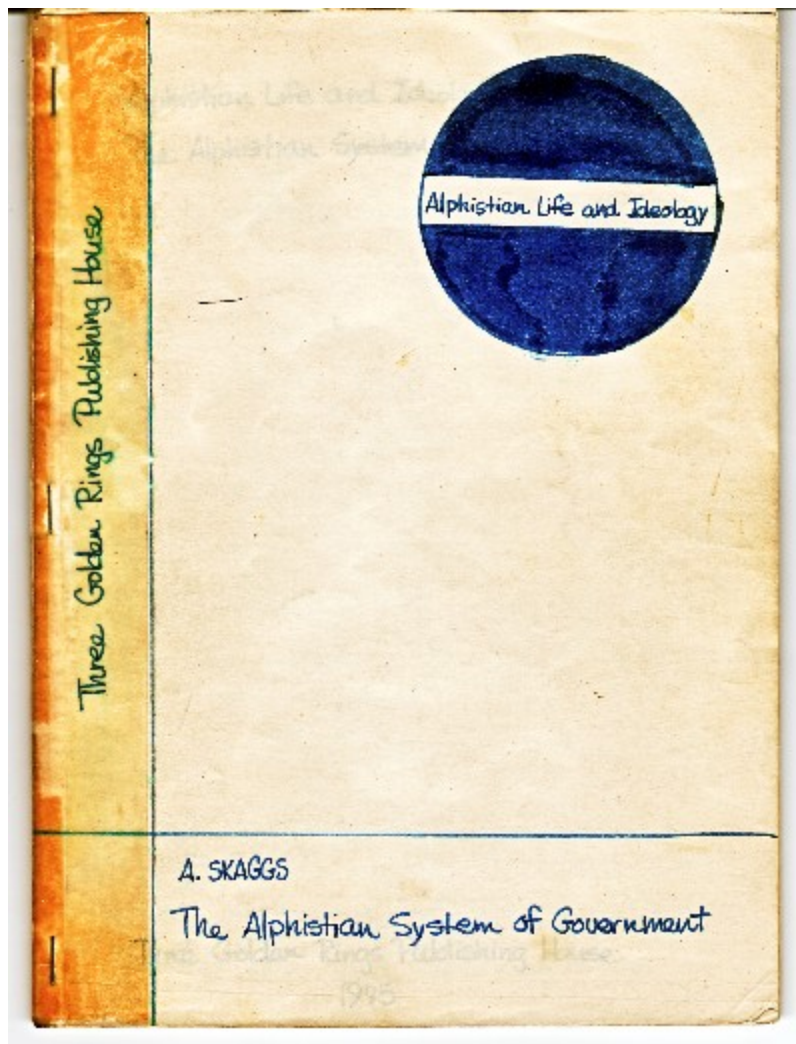
flag - The Alphistian flag was designed soon after the 1968 Olympics. It consisted of three golden interlocking rings on a white field. This simple flag flew above Entiba for several years. In 1972, a huge controversy erupted over whether Alphistia’s flag should be honored and loved as

much as the American flag was. Although the Spor argued for equal respect, many citizens were outraged. This caused a schism that was never really resolved. In 1973, the Swimming Pool replaced the last remains of physical Entiba, and the Alphistian flag no longer flew in Sakazhavesa.

Golden Book Encyclopedia - Although I never had the complete set of the extremely colorful children's "Golden Book Encyclopedia", my cousins Sue and Lynn had it. I was always able to borrow various volumes of it and found it extremely interesting. We did have a copy of volume 1, so I became an expert of sorts on many topics covered that began with the letter "A" (such as Andorra), and luckily – the article on alphabets. It included a small chart showing the history of the alphabet, starting with the Phoenecian letters, and then Greek, and how eventually our own alphabet was devised from Latin letters. In late 1967, I was inspired by this article to invent the Alphistian alphabet, and that is how Alphistia was born.



government book from 1975 – When I was on spring break in my junior year of high school, I had an extremely productive period and wrote a 50 plus page booklet called “The Alphistian System of Government”. Unlike so many of Alphistia's early documents, this one survived. It was hand written in my neat Catholic school penmanship, and outlined a democratic system of government for a future Alphistia after the Klava. There were also chapters on local government, the justice system and an unusual chapter about government policy to provide a “decent” standard of living for all citizens. For a 17 year old, it wasn't at all a bad effort and the booklet still reads well.



Granny Neal - Mrs. Pearl Neal was an elderly woman who lived across the street from Sakazhavesa. Her house was considered a province of Alphistia and called “Nealika”. Mrs. Neal was known by everyone on Putnam Street as “Granny Neal”. She'd lived in the same house for many years, was a widow, and had raised her grandson Gene Neal. She was

extremely religious and went to the nearby First Church of the Nazarene, a place my mother told me once “was where the holy rollers with money go”. Granny certainly wasn’t rich, but she had a spotless house full of antiques. Somehow her house remained cool in spite of the torrid heat of a Kentucky summer. My mother and Granny were quite good friends who spent many an evening gossiping on Granny’s back porch under the shade of some beautiful trees. Granny knew practically nothing of Alphistia, or that she was an honorary citizen of the country. She was included simply because my mother considered her such a good person.

Hanky Smith – Hanky was a boy who lived on Putnam St, and who was the biggest “rival” to Alphistian projects. He was never a part of Alphistia, but did mimic it, even establishing his own country for a while called “Amerigo”. This didn’t last, although Alphistia lost some of its citizens then. When we weren’t quarreling, Hanky sometimes would come to observe Alphistia’s progress, such as it was. During a particularly elaborate period of construction of small shanty buildings in the backyard of Sakazhavesa (where I lived at 924 Putnam Street), Hanky wanted to shop in the Alphistian Department Store. I obliged and exchanged (at a very good rate) some Alphistian perantes for a dollar or two. This increased Alphistian foreign currency reserves a great deal.

Inflot - Inflot was the name given to Alphistia’s news agency, sometime in the early 1970s , probably as a result of reading Sputnik and other Soviet magazines. It resembles the name of the Soviet airline “Aeroflot”. Eventually, the name Inflot changed its meaning, and now refers to the river and lake boats that would be used for excursions and freight in Alphistia. The name of the news agency nowadays is “Infor”.

Kilreti – Alphistia had its own parliament, called the Kilreti. It’s not known what the origin of this word is. There generally were not elections to the Kilreti, and any of those involved with Alphistia could be a member of it. There were some disputatious and acrimonious Kilreti meetings, and Mrs Martin was called in more than once in later years to mediate.

Klava - After Alphistia became virtual in 1974, I began to think about ways Alphistia could come into being as a sovereign state at some point in the future. Due to the constant insecurity of life in the US at that time, from the war in Vietnam, to Watergate, to fears of nuclear disaster, to the energy crisis and economic ruin from inflation...the mood was rather pessimistic. There was a lot of talk of doom and cataclysm. In my mind, this wasn’t entirely unrealistic, and I thought that perhaps by the year 2000, some great disaster would destroy civilization as we knew it. Fortunately, I had a well-developed plan to carry on civilization in a micro-form: Alphistia. The cataclysm I called the “Klava”, and referred to pre-Klava and post-Klava eras. Reality intervened, and Reagan was elected in 1980. While I perceived this as a cataclysm, civilization did not collapse. It is 27 years after that, and perhaps Klava has simply been postponed.

Lands and Peoples – I discovered a set of books in the Newport Public Library very soon after I got my first library card in 1966. It was published by Grolier and was a set of 6 volumes bound in black leatherette with bright blue and yellow illustrations of exotic foreign places embossed into the covers. It was called “Lands and Peoples” and I checked out each volume multiple times. A few years ago, I found a set at a flea market and now have it all for myself. It was richly illustrated with many black and white photos with brilliant color photo sections for many countries. It seems that certain influences from some of the photos influenced early Alphistia. In the section on Turkey, there is a photo of a man on a ferryboat crossing the Bosphorus while reading a newspaper called “Aksam”. Aksam became the word in Alphistian for newspapers (and still is), although it wasn’t until I asked a Turkish woman many years later what the word meant (it means “evening”).

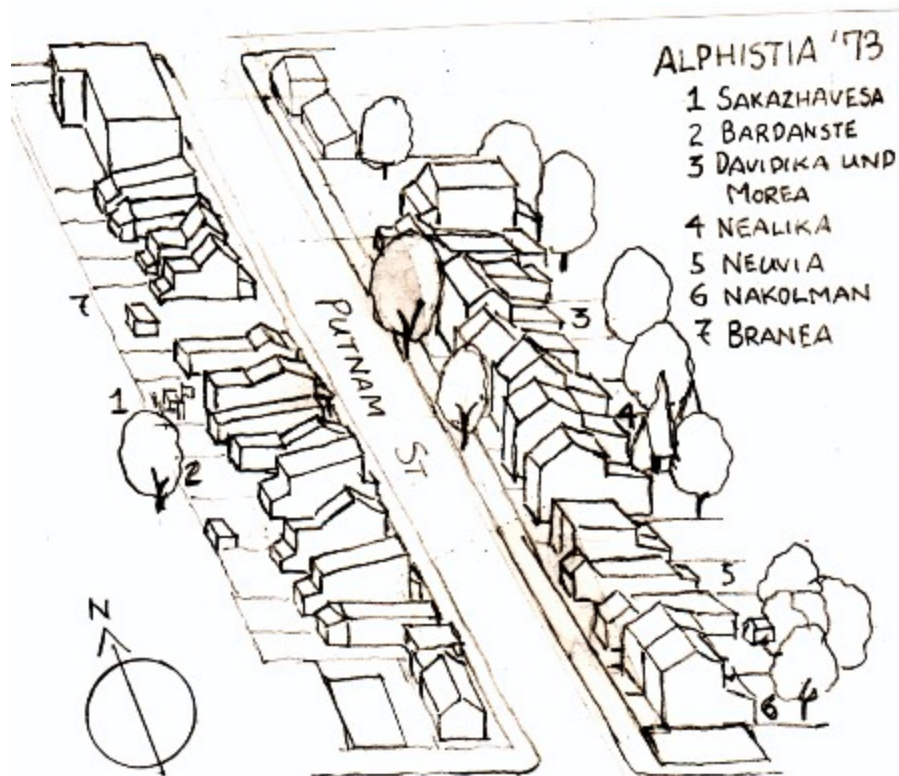
language book from 1970 – Around 1970 I made a small textbook for Alphistian. Although the book has been lost, I do remember something about it. I modeled it somewhat on my school spelling books, and divided it into 10 lessons. I still remember writing “Lesona Vond, Lesona Du, Lesona Tri, Lesona Fratro” etc. There were readings and exercises, and it was written out by hand on paper in a 4.5 by 7 inches format, stapled together at the side. I used it to teach a little to the other kids in the neighborhood, especially to Danny from Bardanste.

leshenum – One of the oldest Alphistian words was “leshenum” (now “lesenum”), meaning motherland, fatherland, native land. The word “landa” is also used to describe Alphistia, but leshenum always had more meaning patriotically. It’s not known where the word derived, although it goes back as far as I can remember Alphistia.

literature – Although I was very creative inventing Alphistia, I did not use it much as inspiration for other artistic projects such as writing stories, songs, or poetry. The one exception to this was a “novella” that I wrote around 1973. I can’t even remember the name of it, although the book was about the friendship of two young men. That was not generally picked up on by the readers of my Great Alphistian Novel, who seemed to think it was a love story about a young man and a young woman. One of the names was “Mika”, which could be why most missed that it was a story about two men. Other than one of the protagonists mourning the great loss of his friend through sickness and ending with the dramatic line: “whatever Mika had, I have too!”, I can’t remember anything about this effort. I did draw a colorful cover for the book and it was perhaps 12-15 pages long, but in a very small format (4.25 by 5.5 inches). Sadly, the book disappeared somewhere along the way.

maps – Maps of Alphistia were not very important until after 1974, when Alphistia became a virtual country. The UPA ’74 booklet contained a stylized map of Putnam Street representing each province as a box along the street. No maps with further detail than that were ever made

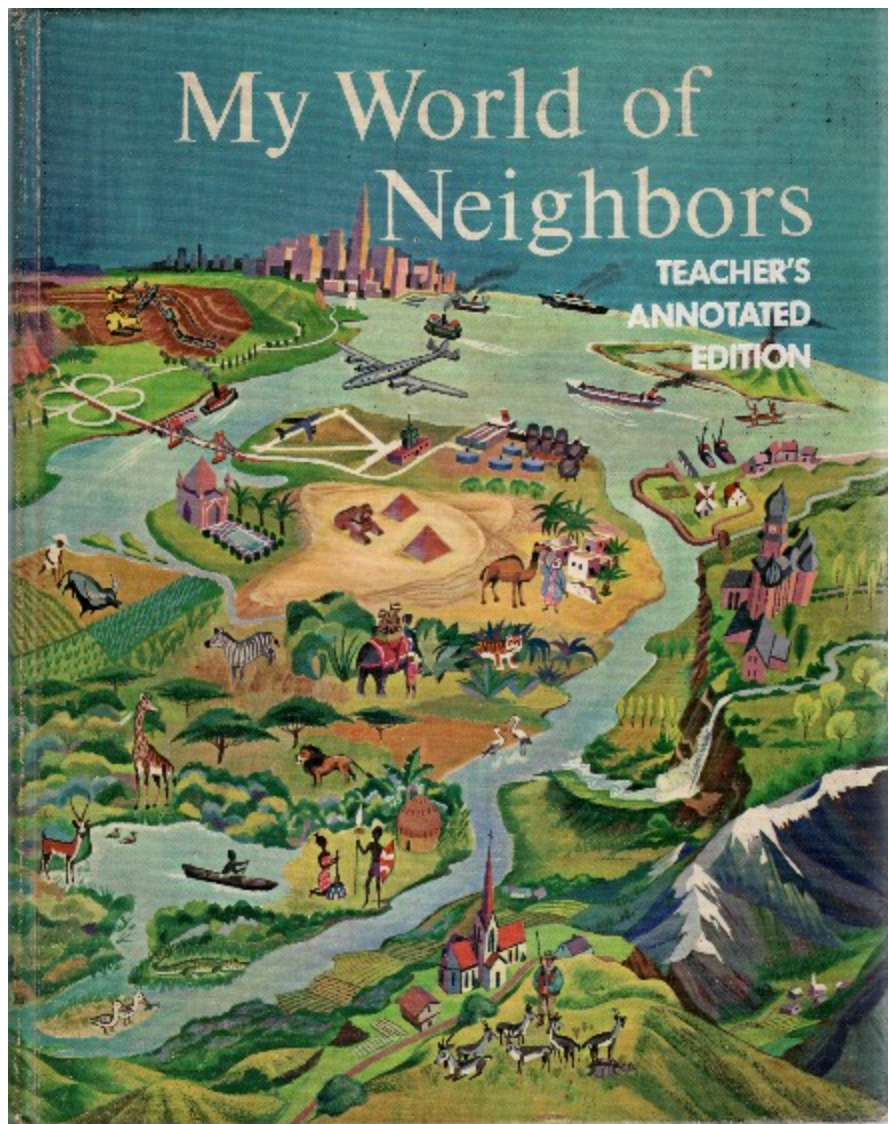
as far as I can remember. The earliest maps of virtual Alphistia from 1974-75 have been lost. The oldest one surviving is from the summer of 1977. In 1975, I made a panoramic drawing of Three Golden Rings Avenue, the main street in Entiba, showing major buildings such as the Alphistian Department Store, the Kilreti, the National Theater, and a Supra auto showroom. In 1976, I made a map of Entiba, modeled in large part on Lexington, where I was going to college at the University of Kentucky. I incorporated most of the buildings I'd drawn in the panorama of TGR Avenue into this map, as well as the campus of the University of Alphistia. The university campus was in many ways a scaled down version of UK's campus, complete with some mock "colonial" buildings. The panorama and the 1976 Entiba map have both survived.



Mrs. Martin - Nelly Martin lived in a renovated shotgun house up the street from 924 Putnam with her son David. He was a brooding car mechanic, known for being one of the best repairment for foreign cars in Northern Kentucky. Mrs. Martin was friendly and talkative, and not long after she and her son moved into their house in 1970 or 1971, she was an interested observer in Alphistia. She tried to act as peacemaker when arguments would spin out of control, particularly in 1973 when there were disputes with Bardanste. Although she was poorly educated and at times would spout off ridiculous opinions, she was a good-hearted women. In the end however, she would not give an inch when political discussions about the Yom Kippur War questioned her assumptions and prejudices. That was our last conversation and further contact was discontinued.

mimeograph - In 1970 or 1971, my mother bought a small format mimeograph machine from a local stationery shop. It was messy and difficult to use, but I was thrilled to have a way to print multiple copies of Alphistian documents. Its main use though, was to print paper currency – the perante. Unfortunately, Alphistia was soon knee deep in perantes of all denominations. Since there wasn't anything to buy with them, Weimar Germany style inflation soon was a feature of Alphistian life.

My World of Neighbors - In the fourth grade at St. Stephen's Parochial School, we started off the year with a pile of new textbooks. While the math and spelling books were part of a familiar series, we also got our geography book, called "My World of Neighbors". I was immediately taken with its cover – a stylized view of the globe with small colorful images of some of the "neighbors". The pictures and maps inside were mostly in color, and I was fascinated with every aspect of this book and the subject of geography. Soon, various aspects of this book influenced Alphistia – our chapter on Africa included a "trip" to Uganda and the then capital, Entebbe. Alphistia's capital became "Entiba".



national anthem – When Nixon went to China in 1971, the US media was full of reports about this strange communist country. I was extremely curious and read as much as I could find about Red China. When the local public television channel aired the ballet/opera “Red Detachment of Women”, I was humming the tunes for weeks after. One of the songs I later discovered (MUCH later – in 2007 actually) was the song “Sailing the Seas Depends on the Helmsman”, a song in tribute to Mao as a revolutionary sea captain. I adapted the tune on my one dollar recorder flute and wrote lyrics starting with “March all you peoples, for this is our native land. Win the final victory, for one flag, for Alphistia”. It went on, and I even translated the lyrics into Alphistian, but all I can remember is the first lines “Thme, tote tu praviki, pa tlaz uz vela leshenum”.

New World magazine - During one of my many visits to the Cincinnati Public Library's main branch, I spied the Soviet propaganda magazine Sputnik. It was modeled on Reader's Digest, and was full of beautiful photos and the "lighter side" of Soviet style communism. Its political articles tended to be just as dull as anything in the mainstream Soviet press, but there was far less of that than in Pravda or Izvestia. I loved this magazine and eventually subscribed to it myself. As part of my Alphistia projects, I made my own mini-Sputnik magazine in 1973 called "New World" magazine. It was smaller still than digest size – 4.25 by 5.50 inches. It was colorful and had 24-32 pages, but I'm no longer able to remember any of its contents. Sadly it was thrown out by mistake by my mother, sometime in the late 1970s.

newspapers – One of the Alphistian projects that kept me busy was to make newspapers, usually single issues appearing sporadically. A glimpse of Archie Bunker on TV reading the Daily News inspired me to make a tiny tabloid with many small sections. It was only 4.25 by 5.5 inches. Other newspaper issues would be made from large sheets of shelf paper. A notorious incident occurred in 1973, when a dispute between myself and Bardanste escalated into a "newspaper war". I wrote several articles for a broadsheet newspaper with denunciations of my opponents as communist sympathizers. The neighbor who received this was quite shocked, and fortunately didn't mention that to anyone but me. It was an early lesson in how effective (and dangerous) propaganda can be. Unfortunately none of the more than a dozen various newspaper artifacts have survived.

numbers - Alphistian had its own number names, as follows:

0 - hana, 1 - vond, 2 - du, 3 - tre, 4 - fratro, 5 - frazha

6 - ses, 7 - septi, 8 - okti, 9 - ninea, 10 - deki

11 - kalmia, 12 - dalmia, 13 -talmia, 14 - deki und fratro, 15 - deki und frazha etc.

20 - dudek, 21 - dudek und vond etc

30 - tridek, 40 - fratrodek, 50 - frazhadek etc.

100 - senti, 1000 - tusant, 1,000,000 - milion

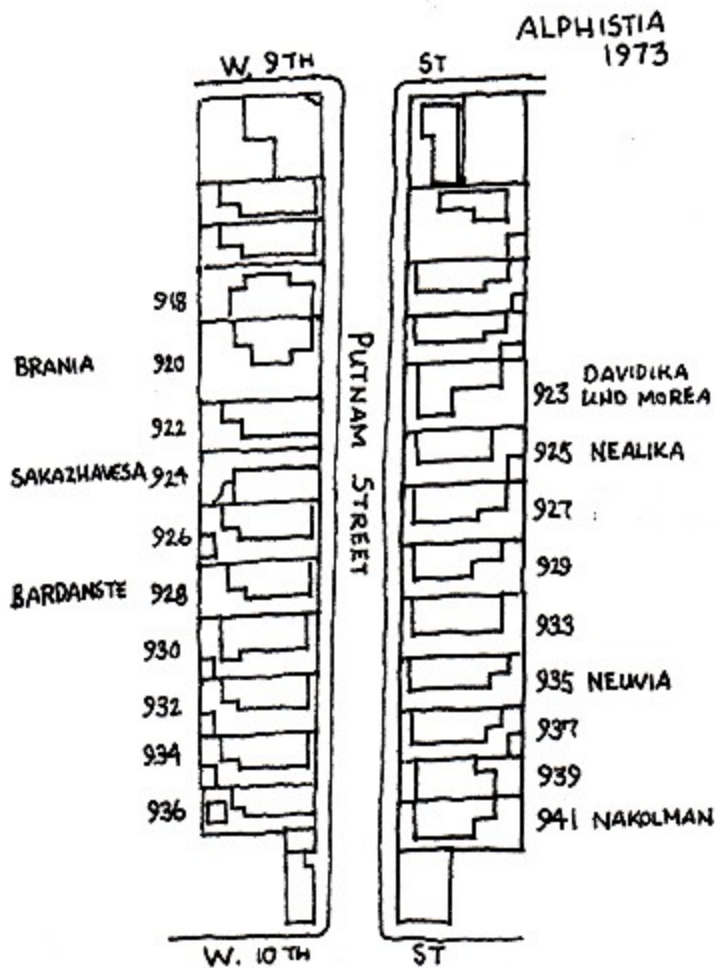
oldest words - Alphistian has about a dozen words left from the earliest days of word formation.

These include (current form in parentheses): leshenum (lesenum) - native land; nomikli (nomikle) - book; ulanta (ulanta) - beautiful; yaro (yare) - boy; hoza (hos) - house; oavte (reviste) - magazine; aksam (aksam) - newspaper; lantasha (lantase) - language; nenan (nend) - shop; praviki (pravik, praviken) - people; ulana (ulane) - because; vlavik (vanar) - flag; voval (vase) - go.

pengo - In the late 1960s, I started to make Alphistian coins. Since I did not have smelting and minting equipment, I smashed up several of my mother's clay pots (to her distress) . I made rather rough-hewn and vaguely circular coins from the orange pots, and used black magic marker to write and draw on them. I named the coin the "pengo", which it turns out it very similar to the Norwegian word for money: "penge". At some point I buried a good number of these pengoes in the dirt patch in our backyard or dropped them into a crack in the concrete area where our garage had once stood. Those archaeological artifacts are likely still where they were deposited, although probably by now, the magic markings have been washed away by rain or dampness.

perante – Alphistia's paper currency was called the "perante". Its value was arbitrarily set at two per dollar, although its value would presumably have been much less because so many of them were printed on the small mimeograph machine given to me around 1970.

Putnam Street - Newport Kentucky was largely designed on a grid pattern, with square-shaped blocks. On the east side of town, alleyways cut through the middle of the blocks. On the west side, where I grew up, what might have been alleys were instead narrow streets with smaller lots for more modest houses. Putnam Street was one of these, and ran from 7th St south to 12th St, ending at the railroad tracks. The homes along Putnam Street were a motley collection of one floor 4 or 5 room shotgun houses, some two floor wooden or shingled homes, and a few brick houses. The lots were 20 by 80 feet, and most of the houses were built right up to the sidewalk. A very narrow sideyard (and sometimes a driveway) led to a backyard. Alphistia was located between 9th and 10th Streets. There were no shops on the street, no through traffic, and hardly any trees except in the backyards. It was a very modest street of working class people, mostly homeowners. It was evenly divided between Catholics and various Protestant denominations, was 100% white, and there were no Jewish residents. While "outsiders" generally mispronounced the name at Putnam ("put" rhyming with "hut"), everyone who lived on it pronounced "put" to rhyme with "foot".



Records Department - In the early 1970s, I began to archive all the Alphistian documents in boxes in my room, in a more organized manner. I called this collection the Records Department. Sadly, I moved many of these documents into the non-rain-proof constructions that were part of our backyard until 1973, and some documents were inevitably damaged. When my mother moved to her hometown in Maysville, Ky in 1976, we stored many Alphistian documents in an old metal breadbox in a shed in the backyard. Damp ruined quite a few of these papers. Fortunately since 1980, nearly every document has been saved that was made, and the few surviving documents from Alphistia's first 13 years have been preserved.

Sakazhavesa - Sakazhavesa was the name of the province where I lived – 924 Putnam Street. Its name is derived from two sources – the Indian squaw Sacajawea who guided Lewis and Clark, and a kind of acronym for the spelling of the name Skaggs, using Alphistian letter names (although not entirely consistently sa ka zha ve sa would actually spell out s-k-zh/g-v-s). In any

case, this name evolved into the current name for Alphistia's province: Sakasavesa.

sampo cards - I invented a cardgame modeled on "Uno" , probably around 1970-71. I was fascinated by Finland for a while, and the word "sampo" became part of my vocabulary. In the Finnish national epic poem the Kalevala, the sampo was a magic mill which made gold for its owner. Sampo became very popular with the children involved in Alphistia, particularly with the Bardanste citizens.

sanovision – After I got the episcopes projector, I developed "television" for Alphistia which consisted of using episcopes filmstrips attached to cardboard rollers which were inserted into a shoebox so they could be turned and viewed through a "screen" cut into the shoebox lid. Sound was from the small cassette recorder I had. I made several of these "sanovisions" as I called them, combining the Alphistian word sae-see (corrupted to "sano") and the English word vi-sion, which also means "seeing or viewing". An odd Alphistian/English neologism was the result. Several sanovision programs were made, including a news show and a "documentary" extolling world peace, which I remember had a lump in throat effect on the kids I showed it to. Although I planned a sanovision for every province, this did not happen, and after the swimming pool appeared in Sakazhavesa, no more sanovision programs were made.

Spor - the Spor was the ruler of Alphistia. The name seems to be derived from S.P.Q.R., which I frequently saw in books and movies about ancient Rome, especially in reference to the emperor. The word is still used as the name of the elected premier of Alphistia. In Alphistia's early years, the Spor was always me. In one of the few elections held, Danny Coffman was actually elected Spor, but I falsified the results in a moral lapse that was soon suspected by all the other kids. I admitted my sins, but cancelled the election and prevented any future ones.

Sporess - the female counterpart of the Spor, and usually Barbara from Bardanste. When I feuded with them, another girl would be named Sporess. After Alphistia became virtual in 1974, the office of the Sporess was eliminated.

steel building - In 1971, my mother bought a 100 square foot portable storage shed from the Montgomery Ward catalog for \$99.00. The intent was to provide me with a place to build a "chapel" for the religious ceremonies that pre-occupied much of my time. A secondary hope was to prevent the use of much of the backyard as a small city - Entiba, that resembled a shantytown. The Steel Building leaked, was hotter than could be imagined in the summer, and quickly became what it was designed for: a storage shed for junk that didn't need to be kept inside the house. The L-shaped area around the shed soon became a new construction site for Entiba. In the summer of 1973, my mother tried a new tack. She replaced the Steel Building with a 12 foot wide, 3 foot deep swimming pool. This effectively ended Entiba's physical form, since

there was no space whatever for construction of buildings etc.

Supra When Alphistia became virtual in 1974, I could design a whole new society. One of the outcomes of this was Alphistia's own car, which I called the Supra. It was a compact boxy sedan meant as a "people's car". At the time, I would never have given a thought to trademark the name Supra. That was too bad, because in the 1980s, Toyota introduced a car in the US with the same name, and if I had already owned the trademark, I would have become a wealthy man.

swimming pool – When the Steel Building that my mother bought to neaten up the backyard and encourage Alphistia to relocate indoors failed to do that, she strategized how best to get rid of the mess. In the early summer of 1973, without announcement, the Steel Building was moved to a neighbor's backyard, the shanty town that was Entiba was carted off, and a three foot circular swimming pool was set up. This did indeed succeed in ending the constructions in the backyard, and by the end of that summer, Alphistia took a virtual form.

Tava – When Alphistia became virtual in 1974, the country was reformed with just three provinces. One of these was Tava, and the other two were Sakazhavesa and Usta. Tava was in the south in the earliest maps of the virtual Alphistia. When the map was recreated in 1975-76, Tava was a central province to the west of Sakazhavesa. In the early 1990s, Tava was renamed Taveola. Its capital city has always been named Tava however.

Three Golden Rings – the symbol for Alphistia was for a long time the three golden rings of the Alphistian flag. Now they refer to the three "original provinces" created after 1974, called Sakazhavesa, Tava, and Usta (now called Sakasavesa, Taveola, and Dalvarne). The name was usually shortened to TGR, or TKR (pronounced ta-ka-ra using the Alphistian letter names). Since the early 1990s, the national symbol has been the Compass A (Kompas A), a stylized compass in the form of the letter A. The TGR symbol is still used however.

UPA – In the early 1970s, Alphistia became known as the United Provinces of Alphistia, and was often referred to as the UPA. This lasted until sometime in the 1980s, and since then the country has been officially called simply Alphistia, although it still is a republic of 9 provinces.

UPA '74 book – Sometime in 1973 I bought a copy of the Novosti Press Agency Yearbook called "USSR '72". Although full of turgid Soviet propaganda, the book was fascinating for me, and in early 1974, I started on what I hoped to be a lengthy work about Alphistia, which I called UPA 74. I did finish more than 50 pages of it, mostly describing the geography of Alphistia as it "existed" on Putnam St., although by then, Alphistia already was virtual. I wrote in a style mimicking the flowery prose of the Soviet book, and much of it is really over the top. I'm aware I

was just 15 or 16 at the time, but by the time I wrote “Alphistian System of Government” in 1975, my writing style had improved greatly. This booklet has survived.

Usta – Alphistia’s northernmost province was named Usta in the virtual maps made from 1973 on. The capital city has been called Usta as well. Since the early 1990s, Usta has been known as Dalvarne province. Usta and Dalvarne have always been situated along the southern shore of Lake Usta.

Ve uz Vond – Alphistia’s official slogan was “We are One” – Ve uz Vond in Alphistian. It encouraged national unity, although that was rarely the case in everyday Alphistia.

Virtual Alphistia – The swimming pool erected in 1973 succeeded in putting to an end the “real existing Alphistia” as I had known it. From then on, Alphistia became a virtual country. During 1974, my thoughts about Alphistia began to take the form of a country emerging after an unexplained cataclysm destroyed contemporary civilization as we knew it. Survivors came together to create a very small new country called Alphistia, somewhere in the vicinity of Cincinnati. At first it had only three provinces, called Sakazhavesa, Tava, and Usta. I drew some maps but these have been lost. The population for this first version of Alphistia very small indeed – under 5000 inhabitants. The towns were very small – Entiba with only 1500 people, and the towns of Tava and Usta even smaller. There were other settlements too, but I can remember the name of only one: Vakasa – a resort town on a lake in the northern Usta province. Motor vehicles were not used, but small two seat pedicars were available. Sometime in 1975, Alphistia was redesigned and its number of provinces increased from three to eleven. The new map of Alphistia resembled postwar Poland, and this was due in part because I had acquired a small statistical handbook for Poland at Cincinnati’s annual book sale in Fountain Square. It included a beautiful map of Poland showing all its voivodships (counties). In the summer of 1977, when I worked at a job at the University of Kentucky without much to do, I made more maps and a gazetteer for Alphistia. These documents have survived, and I am happy to say, nearly everything from then on was preserved.

Zhat Hoza – Alphistia consisted of half a dozen or so houses along Putnam Street. Each house was called a province, but the house itself where the citizens lived was called “Zhat Hoza” (Great House), instead of “capital”. Only Sakazhavesa had a “real” capital - Entiba, which existed in various forms in the backyard as a “town” made up of packing crates and cardboard boxes.